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# A Book of Remembrance



Mary Ripley Hitchcock.

From  
Julia C. R. Dorr.

Oct 31, 1905

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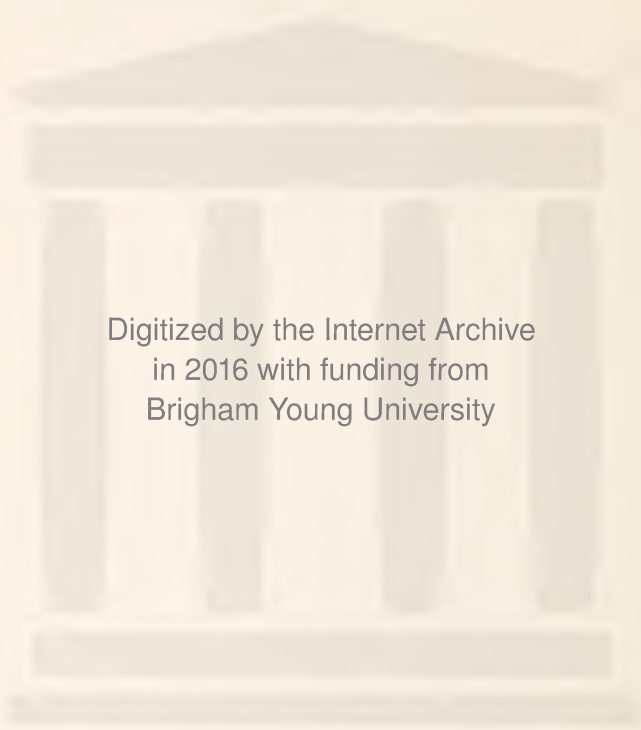
A Book of Remembrance

By

JULIA C. R. DORR.

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TO THE  
GRANDCHILDREN  
AND THE  
GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN  
OF  
WILLIAM YOUNG RIPLEY

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## A Book of Remembrance.

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It is said of us Americans that few of us know the first names of our great-grandfathers, and fewer still the maiden names of our great-grandmothers. So, lest my grandchildren and great-grandchildren, as the procession increases, should never know that the myth, the phantom, they call great grandmother Dorr once bore another name, I am going to tell them, and, in fact, all the great-grandchildren of William Young Ripley, something about their Ripley ancestry. They can each pass the record on to coming generations, if it so pleases them, thus doing something toward enlightening the ignorance as to family matters at which our far-removed cousins on the other side of the Atlantic are inclined to scoff.

This is not to be in any sense a genealogy, yet it is well, when one can, to begin at the beginning. Of our Ripley ancestors in England very little is definitely known. Some of you, no doubt, will one day visit the Cathedral in the quaint old city of Chester. If you enter the nave by the west door, you will find half buried in the carving of the capital of the second column on your left, the letters "S. R." They were the initials of a fourteenth century abbot, Simon Ripley by name, who rebuilt the nave during his administration. In one of the cloisters you may find a blackened slab that once covered his coffin, on which the same letters appear. Tradition says the abbot was a far-off kinsman of ours—a statement that is somewhat mythical and open to doubt, but pleasant nevertheless, as he seems to have been a good man and true to the light of his day and generation. Somewhat mythical, too, are the stories of noble descent, of our kinsmen of Ripley Castle,

and of our right to the coat of arms thus described in Burke's Heraldry:

"Ripley, Co. of York. Per chev., dovetailed and vert., three lions ramp, counterchanged. *Crest*, a demi-lion ramp, regard, vert., collared, or., holding between the paws an escutcheon, per chev., or and az."

It is only fair to say, however, that my father looked into the matter rather deeply and himself believed that we had an undoubted right to the coat of arms that he used as a seal. However this may be, we can well afford, with Tennyson, to "smile at the claims of long descent." If our ancestors were not of noble blood, then they were stout-hearted English yeomen, as greatly to be honored as any of the mail-clad robbers that "came over" with William the Conqueror.

This much is certain. In 1638, William Ripley, or Replie, as he himself spelled the name, came from Wymondham, Norfolk County, England—Wymondham being a market town about ten miles from Hingham. He seems to have joined a company of emigrants made up at this latter place, and sailed for America with his whole family on board the ship Diligent, of Ipswich, John Martin, master. The baptismal names of his three children, John, Abraham, and Sarah, are to be found at Wymondham. He settled in Hingham, Mass., building a house on "ye town lot of fower acres." One of his descendants now occupies a house on the same site.

This William, the first of our name in this country, seems to have been a man of character and substance. I append a literal copy of his will, made from the records in Hingham. It will be noticed that he bequeaths nothing to his daughter Sarah, who, in 1663, had married one Jeremiah Beale. No doubt she received her "dowry" on the occasion of her marriage. Let us hope it was a goodly one! Neither does he mention his second wife Elizabeth, who was the widow of Thomas Thaxter, of whom he bought the "lot lying for five acres" that he bequeaths "unto my sonne Jno."

## WILLIAM REPLYE OF HINGHAM.

I, William, being sick & weake, do make this my last will:—

Unto my eldest sonne Jno. Replye the dwelling house he now dwells in, with all the barns &c., but my sonne Abraham shall have liberty to use ye new barne for his cowe & other occasions; & the Carts for his Cattle for the term of fower years without molestation.

Unto my sonne Jno. all ye land within that felde, namely, ye lott ye town gave me, lying for fower acres, and ye lott w<sup>ch</sup> I bought of Jno. Honisham, lying for fower acres, and ye lott which I bought of Thomas Thackster, lying for five acres & ye lott w<sup>ch</sup> I bought of Stephen Payne, lying for fower acres, with all privileges belonging to these lotts.

Unto my sonne Jno. my planting lott w<sup>ch</sup> I bought of Jno. Prince, lying for three acres upon the World's End, next unto Jno. Tucker, north; next unto Jeremy Beates, Eastward; butting upon ye sea West & South.

Unto my sonne Jno. fower acres of salt meadow which I bought of Jonas Austen, lying at Lyford's Liking, next unto Thomas Lincome, West; next unto Nathaniel Beals, East; butting upon ye old Planter's Hill, North, & upon ye Neck, South. I give unto my son Jno. a fresh meadow w<sup>ch</sup> I bought of Thomas Underwood, lying in Crooked Meadow, with a little piece of meadow belonging to the same, lying next unto Samuel Ward, Eastward, & the River, Southward.

Unto my sonne Jno. a peece of salt meadow lying at Coney-chasset, for three acres, more or less—it is in the third division.

Unto my sonne Jno. my horse, ye horse colt yt came of my mare, two oxen, Collier & Buck, fower cowes, three Sheepe ewes with three Lambs, eight goates; half ye drie goates & half ye Kids.

Unto son Abraham ye home lott which I bought of Thomas Underwood, together with the orchyard & fencing & other appurtenances thereto belonging; w<sup>ch</sup> lott lyeth for five acres next unto Jno. Lasell, East; next Jno. Otis, West; also, unto sonne Abraham all ye fresh meadow yt lyeth at ye end of ye said home lott; all ye salt meadow w<sup>ch</sup> I bought of Thomas Underwood, lying at ye wreare next Francis James, Southward & Robert Joanes, North; ye great lott w<sup>ch</sup> I bought of Thomas Underwood, lying for fifteen acres, next unto Jno.

Lasell, Southeast, and next to Cornelius Cantlebury, north, and butting on ye River; ye planting lott weh I bought of Thomas Underwood lying in ye Neck, for three acres, next unto Matthew Cushan, North & Jno. Beales, South; butting upon ye sea Westward, & Michael Pearse, Eastward.

Unto sonne Abraham, two old oxen, called Broad & Browne, two steares of five years old, one young steare 2 years old, three young cowes & eight milch goates, half ye drie goates & half ye kids, two Ewe Sheepe, two Lambs, five wether Sheepe & two Rams, my mare of three years old, my ffether bed & green rug, one Blanket & one Broade Brasse Kettle, one iron Pott and a chest yt ye cover is loose; a little coper & three empty barrells. The Cart & wheelles, plows & plow irons, with all the chaynes, shall be equally divided between my sonnes Jno. & Abraham.

Unto sonne Abraham one swine of a yeare old & ye vantage. Unto sonne Jno. my best Cloake & 2 peeces of Cloath of the same, so much as will make a suit of apparrell, one payer of shoes, a payer of stockings, my best hat & my great Bible.

Unto sonne Abraham my Book of Martyrs & all my other apparrell.

Debts due me from severall persons, as they do receive any, they shall be equally divided between ye said Jno. & Abraham —debts due for me to pay Jno. & Abraham shall pay it equally together. Jno. & Abraham, Executors.

30 June 1656.

WILLIAM REPLYE. (seal)

Witness

Mathew Cushin,

John Thaxter.

24 July 1656 Matthew Cushin & John Thaxter deposed:

Inventory taken July 20, 1656, by John Hubbard and Matthew Hawke.

Amt. £332. Jno. Ripley deposed before ye court 29 July, 1656.

Why the sons of William Replye chose to change the spelling of the name we can only imagine, but it was evidently done during their father's lifetime, for it will be noticed that it was Jno. *Ripley* who "deposed before ye court" 29 July, 1656, just nine days after his father's death.

This John died in Hingham, February 2, 1684. His wife was Elizabeth Hobert, daughter of the first pastor of the church in that town. They had seven children, the second of whom, JOSHUA, born May 9, 1655, was the direct ancestor of our branch of the Ripley family. He was the great, great, great, great-grandfather of my children, holding, of course, the same relationship to the children of my brothers and sisters.

He married, November 28, 1682, HANNAH BRADFORD, granddaughter of Gov. William Bradford of the Plymouth Colony; her father, William Bradford, Jr., having been Deputy Governor during his father's declining years. The young pair lived first in Hingham, but removed later to Windham, Conn. Here they lived and died. I give the inscriptions on their grave-stones:

"Here lies peacefully interred the body of Joshua Ripley, Esq., one of His Most Worshipful Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the County of Windham, died"

Here the inscription is obliterated, but the town record says May 8, 1739.

The other inscription is as follows:

"Here lies interred the body of that most worthy, most virtuous, most ingenuous gentlewoman. Mrs. Hannah B. Ripley, the well-beloved consort of Joshua Ripley, Esq., who, after she had led a most lovely and eventful life, fell asleep in Jesus, May 28, 1738, in ye 76th year of her age."

Ah, children, if we could but sit at her feet, and hear her tell the story of that "lovely and eventful life!" Just think of it. She was born only forty-two years after the landing of the Pilgrims. Her grandmother was the beautiful mistress Alice Southworth, who crossed the broad Atlantic for love of William Bradford. She knew Myles Standish and his high spirited Barbara, and dear, brave Priscilla Alden, and Mary Winslow and pretty Elizabeth Tilly. Perhaps Hobomok made bows and arrows for her in her childhood, and that she sat at Elder Brewster's feet.

Now comes a gap of many years, the story of which would be merely a genealogical table, like the Old Testament records. This Joshua, whom by way of distinction we will call Joshua I, had nine children, one of whom was Joshua II, who married Elizabeth Lathrop of Windham. This second Joshua was the father of Nathaniel, my grandfather, who was born February 14, 1768—Saint Valentine's Day, you perceive. Can it be possible that the traditions of his birthday have anything to do with the fact that he was married four times? His first wife was Sibyl Huntington, with whom he lived twenty-one years. She was the mother of seven children.

His second wife was Alice Maltby, who died two years after her marriage, leaving no child. The third was Fanny White, and the fourth was Philena Wales, who, childless herself, was the tender and devoted step-mother of her immediate predecessors' three little children, one of whom was only a baby when she first took charge of it.

But in this brief chronicle we can follow only the direct line. The only one of the four wives of our grandfather Nathaniel with whom we can have any dealings here is Sibyl Huntington, the wife of his youth. He was twenty-four when they were married in Windham, and she was only nine months his junior. How much we owe to her we can never know, what traits of character, what subtle idiosyncracies. But this much we do know. We get from her our early whitening hair, the snowflakes that have fallen before the appointed time upon the heads of her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. We do not object to this. In fact, we are rather proud of it. But in her day no doubt it was a real trial, what our elders called "a cross." When our Sibyl, a young woman of twenty-three, was married, she wore a turban under which her soft white locks were safely hidden. Her son told me that she always wore a turban, and that he could not remember having ever seen her with uncovered head, though he was a

lad of about fifteen when she died, March 8, 1813, in the 46th year of her age.

My recollections of my grandfather are few in number, yet strangely vivid. I can see him before me as I write, as distinctly as if I had seen him but yesterday; and yet I cannot recall a word that he ever said to me, personally. I fancy he had not much to say to the younger generation, and very little to do with them. That was left to the women. Yet there were two or three years of my childhood when I must have seen him very often. His three younger children, the children of Fanny White, were but a few years older than I, and we were companions and playmates. He was a tall, spare man, rather severe in aspect, masterful in manner, and very reserved. He had even more than the common New England reticence of that day. What he knew he knew absolutely. His word was not to be disputed or gainsaid. I well remember the impression made upon me when a mere child by a little speech of his that I happened to hear. He was living at the time in Weybridge. His wife remarked one day that she had not been off the farm in three months. "That's no matter," he said. "Home is the place for a woman." Yet though he had what seem to us narrow ideas, he was a thoroughly good man, honest, upright, just according to his light, and, in a way, devout. Unless my memory fails me, the rite of family prayers was observed in his family, on Sunday morning only. Then he was accustomed to read a chapter or two in straight course, beginning with Genesis, and omitting absolutely nothing. The reading was not always unto "edification," as far as we children were concerned. The long prayer followed, when the rest of us knelt; but he stood erect before his Maker, with his eyes closed and his hands resting on the back of his chair. There is a picture of the poet Wordsworth, a portrait of his old age, that has always seemed to me strikingly like Nathaniel Ripley. It is the one with bowed head and downcast eyes. I wish I could reproduce it for you here.

He was a carriage maker and a farmer. I think he was not a successful man financially, because I know that my father—his second son William—supported him for many years, making his last days care-free and happy.

It would be worth much if we could look back to that comparatively humble home in Middlebury where the children of Nathaniel and Sibyl were reared. It must have been a home of refinement as well as one where courage and ambition took strong root. There were three boys, Samuel Painter, William Young, and George Huntington, besides another son who died in infancy. They were all men of exceptionally fine presence, tall, stately, born to command. Led by what influence I do not know, Samuel went early to Charleston, S. C., where he grew rich and prosperous, married, and died late in life. George was a gay, debonair young scapegrace, handsome, admired, and fond of leisure and pleasure.

Like his older brothers, he drifted southward, going to New Orleans. What he did there I never knew. I never saw him but once, when he visited the North in 1834, or thereabouts; but I well remember how he looked, and how fine I thought he was. Two years later, when he was twenty-eight, he entered the Texan navy, and that—"O, the pity of it, Iago!"—was the last his family ever knew of him.

The three daughters were Julia, Laura and Elizabeth. The latter name seems to have been a favorite with our forbears. It appears and re-appears with each generation. The elder, for whom I was given my first name, and whom I loved best of the three, was a gentlewoman of the old school, self-poised, self-respecting, and commanding the respect of others, even in an age when to be called "an old maid" was a term of reproach that can hardly be understood by the girls of to-day. She married, late in life, Jonas Rice of Bridport, Vt. She was a noble woman who would have graced any station.

Laura and Elizabeth both married Congregational ministers. Laura, at the time of her engagement to the Rev. Nelson Bar-



bour, expected to go with him as a missionary—to India, I believe—a country with whose life and whose needs they were about as familiar as with the mountains of the moon. The Rev. Nelson was not a man of large calibre, and I often wonder what the learned Brahmins would have thought of him and his instructions. However, the plan failed, and they lived and died in Dummerston, having no children. I remember aunt Laura as a rather pretty young woman, somewhat overburdened by a sense of her own responsibilities and shortcomings, and those of other persons as well. She spent a year or two with my father in Charleston, which was probably the gayest period of her whole life.

I fancy Elizabeth was the most intellectual of the three sisters, and in some ways the most attractive. I thought her a great lady. Her husband was the Rev. John Stocker, of Muscatine, Iowa. Well educated, capable, God-fearing women, the three sisters seem yet to have belonged to a somewhat different type from the three brothers. They were not closely akin, though they were always on the best of terms. I can readily imagine that George may have been a trial to them.

And now, having disposed of his brothers and sisters, I come to my father, the grandfather and great-grandfather of those for whom this chronicle is written.

William Young Ripley, second son of Nathaniel and Sibyl Huntington Ripley, was born in Middlebury, Vt., December 13, 1797. Of his earliest years, his childhood, I know absolutely nothing beyond the fact that he went to school and learned to "read, write, and cipher"—literally that and nothing more. He never attended school a single day after he was twelve years old. Yet do not imagine, you who never knew him, that he was not an educated man. He had an inborn love of learning, and a fondness for books that was almost a passion. Few men were better informed on all points than he. He was catholic in his tastes, while especially fond of history and fiction. He had read widely and deeply, and what he read he remembered.

He was a living proof that knowledge and culture may exist outside of colleges and the so-called learned professions.

But this is a digression. He seems to have been early impressed with the conviction that it was his duty, in New England parlance, to "do for himself;" in other words, to relieve his father as early as might be from the burden of his support. He was ambitious, and eager to make the most of life and opportunity. He was proud of his early struggles. It pleased him to tell his grandchildren how, when he was twelve years old, he "hired out" to a farmer, working thirty days for the enormous sum of 18 $\frac{1}{2}$  cents a day. About that time, his father removed from Middlebury to a farm of his own in the adjoining town of Weybridge; and, a little later on, we find this lad of thirteen buying and selling horses on his own responsibility, and driving a double team from Middlebury to Troy, a distance of some 150 miles, delivering goods.

In 1813, his mother died, and soon after this he left home. "Up to this time," he says in some notes taken from his lips in the summer of 1872, "I fully expected to be a farmer, and live and die in Weybridge. But on the morning after the battle of Plattsburgh, which was fought September 11, 1814, I went to Middlebury, my worldly possessions being some clothes tied up in a handkerchief. There I hired as clerk in Mr. Hager's store for \$30 a year, and my board and washing."

His wages were afterwards raised to \$150. In all, he was with Mr. Hager four years, at the close of which he was a tall stripling of twenty-one, and received from his employer a "recommendation" that might have made any young fellow proud. The yellow document lies before me as I write, in a great red-leather pocket-book that has nobly withstood the ravages of time.

Meanwhile his brother Samuel, five years his senior, had already gone to Charleston, and no doubt he sent home glowing accounts of life in sunny Carolina. I wish we could know just what influences led these three "Ripley boys," born and bred

in the shadow of the Green Mountains, to seek their Eldorado in the far south; and now that I have time to think about it, it is a daily wonder to me that I never asked the question. However this may have been, William determined to follow Samuel.

So he started on his way, having first made four solemn promises to his father. Here they are, boys!

"1st. I will not get into bad company.

"2nd. I will not be idle.

"3d. I will live on what I earn.

"4th. I will tend horses if I can't get anything better to do."

He went well armed. This same old red pocket-book holds other precious papers. Among them are two addressed "to all whom these presents may concern," bearing testimony to the high character of the young bearer, to his marked ability and his unimpeachable integrity. These documents are signed by the Governor of Vermont and thirty-four other men of great social prominence, and high place in the councils of both the state and the nation. I have just read them for the first time, and my heart thrilled as I thought what such endorsements must have meant to a young man just starting out to seek his fortune.

He went down the Hudson from Troy to New York in a schooner, the voyage taking five days; almost as long as a trip across the Atlantic to-day. From there he went by boat to Charleston, arriving there October 28, 1818.

His brother Samuel, as I have said, was already in Charleston, and well established in business. For some reason best known to himself, he did not give his young brother a very cordial welcome, and the latter very soon determined to "hoe his own row," asking neither help or favors from any man. His first venture was as clerk in a hardware store, but the place did not suit him. Then for six weeks he worked for a man named Baker, who one day demanded of him a new duty. A slave was to be flogged, and who but the new clerk

should do the flogging? "Flog your own niggers; I sha'n't do it," said our hero, and threw up his job, forthwith. Nothing daunted, he heard that a certain Mr. Bryan, a dry goods merchant, was in need of a clerk, and immediately engaged with him at a salary of \$450 per annum.

The red pocket-book delivers up the contract between the two parties, which it has held in charge so long, and it shows so clearly the quaint, yet courtly way in which business was done in those days, that I append it here.

"Mr. Bryan agrees to allow Mr. Ripley for his services in his employ, a salary at the rate of Four Hundred and Fifty Dollars, per an., Mr. Ripley to be provided with lodging in the counting room, and to have the privilege of taking goods for his personal use at five per cent on cost.

Charleston, 10th December, 1818.

It is understood that Mr. Ripley can leave the employ of Mr. Bryan, or that Mr. B. can dispense with Mr. R.'s services when either may think proper, after one month's *personal* notice to that effect."

This was the beginning of a life-long friendship. The next April the salary was advanced to \$600 per annum. "Mr. B. will find Mr. R. board and lodging at the rate of five dollars per week." That summer (1819) he was urged to leave the city, being assured that if he remained he would have the yellow fever, and probably die." "I have come to Charleston to live," he said, "and I will not be compelled to run away every summer. If I must have the fever, then I must." He *did* have it, and came very near dying. But after that he was acclimated and safe.

In December of that year his wages were raised to \$750, one hundred of which he proudly sent to his father. Meanwhile he had paid a small sum owing to his brother Samuel and felt himself even with the world. In 1820, a new contract with Mr. Bryan gave him \$1000 a year, with the same provisions and provisos. It must be remembered that one thousand

dollars was a much larger sum then than now. Part of these years at least, he lived with the Bryans, and it was under their roof that he first met the young girl who afterward became his wife and my mother.

Her name was Zulma Caroline Thomas, being the daughter of Jean Jacques Thomas and Susanne De Lacy, or De Lezay, as it was sometimes written. The father was born in London, of French parents, who were undoubtedly among the host of refugees who fled thither at one time or another, either for political reasons, or to escape religious persecution. I am led to this conclusion because while his wife, who was born in La Rochelle was a devout Catholic, he himself was a Protestant. After their marriage they lived in St. Domingo, from which island they fled to Charleston at the time of the insurrection of the slaves under Toussaint L'Overture in 1800.

Here my mother was born on the 29th of March, 1801. The death of both parents left her an orphan when she was four or five years old, and she was placed in the guardianship of Capt. William Hall, of whom the old inhabitants of Charleston tell strange stories, hinting at fraud and dishonesty. However, even if they may have robbed her, there is nothing to show that he, or his wife Mistress Ann, ever treated the little maid unkindly, and we will let their ashes rest in peace.

The Bryans had been always among her most tender and devoted friends, and, as I have said, it was under their roof that she and my father first met, loved, and were betrothed. In the spring of 1822, he went into business for himself, and on the fifth of December of that year they were married. There was a quiet wedding at Madame Hall's, and the ceremony was performed by the Rev. Dr. Gadsden.

"Your mother wore a gown of white China crepe," he says, in the notes to which I have referred. "We boarded with the Bryans until fall, and then decided to go to housekeeping. I was worth just \$1000, and owed no man a cent. You "(J.C.R.)" were born on Sunday morning, February 13, 1825, just as folks

were going to church. Shortly after this, I made my first and only purchase of a slave—Nancy by name—as a nurse for you. She did not behave well, and I would not send her to be whipped, as was the custom. She took advantage of this leniency; and so I sold her to get rid of her, for just five dollars more than I paid for her. Then we moved to the house on King street. We kept three servants, cook, chambermaid, and nurse, hiring the services of the three for \$22 a month.”

Soon after they were settled in the new home, Charleston was ablaze with excitement over the visit of Lafayette. It was the summer of 1825, when he made his triumphal progress through the States. My father has often told me with great glee how, as the grand procession passed the house, he held me, an infant in long clothes, up before the open window; and how the famous General, mounted on a splendid charger, in all the pomp and splendor of his French uniform, caught sight of the baby and doffed his plumed hat, bowing till the feathers swept the ground. Alas! that I can't remember it!

Life in that unpretentious little home seems to have been somewhat idyllic. The young couple walked together, rode together, read together. The mysterious Wizard of the North who kept his identity hidden so long and so well, had already given at least a dozen inimitable novels to the world, and others were following in quick succession. It was interesting to hear from a contemporary like my father, of the eager interest with which every new work from that magic pen was awaited, of how eagerly it was read and re-read, passed from hand to hand, talked about and pondered over.

Byron died in 1824, but the world was still ringing with his name, and Childe Harold, the Corsair, Manfred and Cain, were counted with the great poems of all ages. Among the lesser lights was Thomas Campbell, and my father has often told me how he and his young wife stayed from church one morning to finish “Gertrude of Wyoming.”

But to return to lesser matters. On all fair summer mornings the breakfast table was laid under a spreading fig tree in the little court in King street. "When we wanted a fresh fig, we had only to reach forth a hand and pull one. You don't know anything about figs," he declares—"you who have only seen them pressed in boxes."

But this happy life was of short duration. Delicate always, in the spring of 1826, the young wife fell into a rapid decline. It was determined to try the effect of a journey north, and in July she was carried on a bed to the steamer in Charleston harbor. She seemed to gain rapidly, and was much better when they reached New York. She enjoyed greatly the trip up the Hudson, and a short stay at Saratoga, then the famous watering-place of America. On Friday, July 29th, they reached grandfather Nathaniel Ripley's house in Weybridge. Of the next few days I know nothing beyond the fact that my father's old friends thronged to see them, conspicuous among them being the Youngs and the Warrens—of whom more hereafter.

On Sunday she seemed especially bright and strong, but the end was near. At ten minutes past one o'clock on the morning of Tuesday, August 2d, 1826, the short earthly life was ended.

Her funeral sermon was preached by Rev. Dr. Joshua Bates, president of Middlebury College, and she was buried in the graveyard in Weybridge. If she had lived till last March, she would have been just one hundred years old. For three-quarters of a century her ashes have lain where dust was committed to dust that day. The chapter was ended and the book closed. To me she has always been immortally fresh and young; and for these many years she has seemed to me more my child than my mother. This is the first time I have ever written of her, and I feel like crying "Ave, atque vale!"

Prominent among the early—though not the earliest—settlers of Middlebury were the Youngs and the Warrens, with both which families the Ripleys were on terms of closest neighborly

intimacy. Gen. Hastings Warren, of the Vermont Militia, who led his brigade at the battle of Plattsburgh to his own honor as well as to that of his command, married the daughter of William Young, for whom William Young Ripley was named. So it will be seen that the friendship was of long standing, cemented by the tie of marriage.

When my mother died, the hold of the South upon my father weakened, and he determined to return to Charleston only long enough to close his affairs there and make ready for a life elsewhere. But, meanwhile, what was he to do with his little daughter—only eighteen months old? Possibly because of the old family friendship of which I have spoken, possibly because in his own father's house there were two half-brothers and a little sister who was nearly of my own age—children enough for one household—he finally left me in the care of Mrs. Hastings Warren of Middlebury.

No better choice could possibly have been made. Quick-tempered, high-spirited, impulsive, yet very tender and demonstrative, she gave me just the mothering I needed. If I were to tell you how much I remember of the two years I lived with her, you would hardly believe me; nor how vivid is my recollection of her face and form, her voice and her caresses. She married young and could not have been over forty, or at the most forty-five, though she had two sons who were young men, and a daughter of nearly eighteen, as well as two younger sons.

They were all very kind to me. I was taught to call her "MaWarren"—her sons, "brothers," and her daughter, "Sister Jane." Strange to say, I have less recollection of the latter at this time—of her who was to count for so much in my after life—than of any other member of the family. She was a school girl then, engrossed in her own affairs, and it was her mother who took motherly care of me. Of her father, Gen. Warren, I remember little at this time, though he became very dear to me at a later day.



In due time, my father established the firm of Ripley, Waldo & Ripley, commission merchants in New York, and then he wanted his daughter. But, of course, I had forgotten him. Eighteen months has a short memory. He was only a strange man who gave me pretty things, but who had come to take me away from the only friends I knew anything about. It was quite a struggle. I cried, and Ma Warren cried, and so, I believe, did the youngest boy, Henry. But at last we were off. Luckily, the griefs of childhood are evanescent. My new caretaker was most tender and devoted, and the novelty of the journey soon dried my tears. I remember the trip down the Hudson, the wide wonder of it all, the lights in the saloon or cabin, as it was then called, the glitter of the brass-bound stairs, the obsequious waiters, the crowded table, the kindness of some ladies on board, the landing at New York in the early morning, the drive through the gray, damp streets to 33 Bleeker street (then a fashionable quarter of the city) and waiting in the dining room till Mrs. Westcott, our hostess, should be ready to receive us. I remember sitting there in a child's high chair, with father's arm around me, and watching the maid who was laying the table for breakfast, until Mrs. Westcott appeared. Just why we were ushered into the dining-room I can't say; but it was a chilly morning, and very likely there was no fire anywhere else.

When she came in, I saw a tall, slender woman, with very dark hair and eyes, and a sallow complexion, which, to my childish perceptions, seemed almost yellow. But I "took to her" at once.

Here I lived for two busy, happy years. Mrs. Westcott kept a small boarding-school for little girls, or young girls, who were orphans, or motherless; and rather as a favor, I imagine, my father and one or two other gentlemen were received as boarders. There was a Mr. Westcott, but I remember very little about him, beyond the fact that he had business down town. There were only eight or ten of us girls. The oldest

was Jane Forsythe of New Orleans. She had been a pupil for some years, and must have been nearly "grown up;" for she left in a few weeks after my advent, and shortly afterward we heard with awe-struck souls that Jane was married to a man much older than herself, whom somebody thought was a "Creole." What a Creole might be was a mystery; but from the consternation on the faces of our elders we little ones were sure it was something awful.

Then there was a Laura Smith—a fair-haired girl of twelve or thereabouts—whom I greatly admired; and several younger ones of about my own age. I remember getting lost, and being brought home by a policeman, though I don't know how it happened; after which I was taught the extreme dangers of city life, and that I must always remember my father's name, and that I lived at 33 Bleeker street. I also remember going to a party one day on the same street, and how, as we girls were going home in the charge of a nurse, we found a pigeon with a broken wing, which was mended for us by one of the boarders—a Mr. Larkin.

Mrs. Westcott had two sisters who were of the household, Miss Katherine and Miss Lucretia. The latter was lame and walked with a crutch, but she was a very pretty girl, and lovely to us children. She taught me to sew, and possibly to read, though I have no recollection of any time in my life when I could *not* read. Father once told me, laughingly, that if it had not been for Miss Lucretia's crutch, it was quite possible she would have been my step-mother! She painted, after the delicate, pernickity fashion of the day, with fine strokes that almost needed a magnifier—painted on silk, and velvet, and rice-paper. Watch papers were the fad of the hour, and I assure you my father's watch case was never bare of these ornaments, which, after a while, were always turned over to me. I have one still, in perfect preservation, all doves and roses and hearts and darts; but the prettiest of all—done by this same Miss Lucretia—a bee-hive in gold and sepia, on a bench, with

the brown bees coming and going—crumbled at my touch not long ago, and I reluctantly threw it away. It was done on the daintiest of rice paper—a really beautiful tissue.

I had a little gray kitten at No. 33, named Flibbertigibbet after the dwarf in Kenilworth, by the same Mr. Larkin who put to rights the wing of the pigeon.

I must have known many outside this household, for New York was a small town then, comparatively, and its inhabitants were neighborly. But I remember only a Mrs. Alexander Hamilton, a stately young widow, who made much of me—for father's sake, no doubt. She gave me a pretty work box on my fourth birthday, which is on a bracket in this room to-day, and almost as good as new. Mrs. Hamilton (I have often wondered if her husband had not been a descendant of the great Alexander) had a son about ten years old, named Alexander, also, who had a little monkey that he led round by a chain, and whose antics he was wont to display to my mingled delight and terror. One day the monkey broke a mirror and there was a great commotion.

To be sure, there was a good doctor who attended me through two attacks of lung fever, and who won my enmity by insisting that my feet should be put into water that I thought too hot for endurance; and there was his assistant—a blond-haired young fellow who brought a jar of black leeches one morning and applied them to my neck and chest. I should recognize him if I were to meet him in the street, but I have never quite forgiven him. The scars remain. I doubt if they bled me, but one of my most vivid recollections is of a severe illness of my father's, of the hush in the house, and of seeing Mrs. Westcott come from the sick room with a wash-bowl in her hands and a towel thrown over her arm. The doctors had been bleeding the patient.

The Westcotts grew to be dear friends, and I have letters in my possession written long after we left them. And to my great surprise I received a letter from Miss Lucretia herself

about ten years ago, then a woman long past eighty, saying she had never forgotten "little Julia."

Father's early friends were very loyal to him. Let me say here that when I was about fifteen Mr. and Mrs. Bryan with their youngest son and daughter came to New York for a year or two. Mr. Bryan, still a dry-goods merchant, had a branch store on Canal street, for a while. Father took me down to see them and we spent some delightful weeks with them. Their's was a charming family.

But though he sought the city for its opportunities, my father seems always to have had the country in view as an ultimate home. There was a fine farm about four miles up the creek from Middlebury village, known as the "old Chipman place." The large brick house was built by Nathaniel Chipman, of distinguished memory, jurist, law-giver, and statesman. One of the things father promised himself in his very boyhood was that he would some day be the owner of that farm. And now the time seemed ripe for it. Leaving me with Mrs. Westcott, he came up to Vermont and bought the Chipman place. "My dear Julia—I write you a very little letter, on a very little sheet of paper, because you are a very little girl," he wrote me during this absence, on my fifth birthday.

The brick house had burned down shortly before this and was a heap of blackened ruins. I think he was rather glad than otherwise. Speedily establishing grandfather Nathaniel in what had been the old farm house just across the road from the brick mansion, he left him in charge of the removal of the *debris*, and the preparations for rebuilding. Then he returned to New York, and devoted himself to a final winding up of his business there.

Very early in the spring of 1830, a hair trunk, resplendent with trimmings of red leather and brass nails, was left at Mrs. Westcott's door. It proved to be my own especial property, for lol on the cover were my initials done in brass nails, J. C. R. Into this trunk Miss Lucretia carefully packed my small be-

longings, among which I especially remember a white beaver hat, with a broad satin ribbon and a gold buckle, a chinchilla cap, with a collar to match, and a scarlet coat reaching to my feet, and adorned with light blue braid and buttons. Into this receptacle went also a great quantity of "roses" I had "pieced" for a bed-quilt—hexagons about the size of a half dollar, sewed "overhand." There were enough for a whole quilt, but they were not put together. Verily, little girls were not allowed to be idle in those days.

Of the journey back to Vermont, I remember absolutely nothing; but when we got there we went directly to grandfather Ripley's—on the Chipman place, as I have said, but soon to be known by another name. The house was low, broad, and brown, with red trimmings. There were two front doors, each opening into a large, square room with a bedroom attached. The one at the right was assigned to us, and the first thing father did was to have shelves put up on one side for his beloved books. They made a grand showing for those days.

That spring there was a wonderful freshet, Otter Creek not only overflowing its banks, but flooding the whole intervale. We four children—*i. e.*, my little uncles Joshua and Erastus, and my small aunt Fanny, were greatly excited when a stage load of passengers *en route* from Montreal to Troy, caught in the flood, were brought to our very door *in boats*. Among them was a querulous dame whose ohs! and ahs! whose sighs and groans and exclamations of dismay and disgust, I have never forgotten. One would have thought she considered herself to have fallen among thieves, or at least among Choctaws. Neither have I forgotten her extreme condescension when, seated at last in a comfortable chair before the open fire in our sitting room, her eyes fell upon the shelves, and she announced that she had not expected to find such an array of books in a country farmhouse. I am not romancing, and I have never heard the incident spoken of from that day to this; but I distinctly recollect

the whole affair, my father's quiet assertion of himself, and my own childish anger because I thought the woman held herself above him. She changed her tune very quickly, however, for William Young Ripley, aged thirty-three, six feet and four inches tall, straight as an arrow, dark-haired and blue-eyed, with very decidedly the air noble, was by no means a man to be condescended to, I do assure you. How proud I was of him, to be sure, in the days when I used to sit on his knee, and hunt for the silver hairs that even then began to be scattered sparsely where the snowflakes fell so thickly as the years went on!

"Why do you always say '*my* father?'" asked Erastus one day. "It sounds as if you thought no other little girl ever had a father!"

The building of the new house went on rapidly. I was too young to speculate, or to realize that the house must have a mistress. Perhaps I fancied I was to be housekeeper. But one memorable night father took me in his arms and told me I was to have a new mother. That was news indeed, enough to make any little girl's head swim. A new mother! Then he said there were to be great changes. "Sister Jane" was to be mother henceforth; "Ma Warren" was to be grandma, and all the four—so-called—brothers were to be metamorphosed into uncles. Strange alchemy, this! Surely the world was turning topsy-turvy. Father awakened in the night to hear me saying over and over again, "Sister Jane be mother—Ma Warren be grandma." Evidently I was trying to learn the lesson. It seems to me that I was impressed only by the strangeness of it all—especially with the fact that Ma Warren was to be grandma. And surely that was not a bad thing!

Well, the new house was finished and furnished at last; and just three days before I was six years old there was a quiet wedding at Ma Warren's, in a big, square, white house in Middlebury, on the street running past the Congregational Church, and up towards Chipman's Hill. If the camera could

deal with memories, I would photograph the whole scene for you. The bride was very pretty in her white silk gown, with her fair hair in puffs, and the pink and white coloring that has come down to many of her descendants. Jane Hawley and Mary-Ann Ackley were bridesmaids, and my new mother's brother Hastings, and a partner of her father's whom I used to call "Uncle Tim Harris," were groomsmen. You see I had plenty of adopted relations, though on my own mother's side I had not one.

It was a bright, cold, moonlit night, that tenth of February, 1831, and after the ceremony we—meaning the newly wedded pair and my small self—drove up the creek to the new home, in the old covered sleigh that is now up at Mendon. It was new then, and very magnificent it was thought to be. I was dropped across the road at grandfather's, for I had not yet "moved." But bright and early the next morning I ran over and found them at breakfast, christening the pretty dining-room, with Jane Bezett established in the kitchen. Jane was a middle-aged colored woman, a credit to her race and sex, and as faithful and devoted a servant as a family was ever blessed with. With the exception of two years when she tried to be happy elsewhere, she lived with us until the winter I was married, when she died.

As I look back upon it now, it seems as if we lived in Farmingdale, as that quarter of the town has been called for many years, longer than I ever lived in any one place. But as a matter of fact, that large cream-colored mansion, with its two pillared porticos, its wide hall and its ample rooms, and the two enormous, wide-spreading black-cherry trees shading the yard, was our home for only about six years. There were but few children in the neighborhood, and I was not sent to the district school. For two years I had my daily lessons, and "recited" to father. Nothing gave me any trouble but Colburn's Mental Arithmetic. How I hated it! One day when I had been struggling for weeks over those dreadful 3-6 of 9-10 of

3-4 of 1-2 of mercy knows what else, father came home from the village one day with a thin, yellow-covered book in his hand. "There," he said, "Colburn is too hard for you, and you shall have a rest. Here is your lesson for to-morrow." I was a happy child when I opened the book and found simple questions, with pictures for illustration.

I had also my daily "stent"—a seam to sew, overhand, a yard of ruffling to hem, or a certain number of "rounds" on a stocking to knit. We wore woolen stockings in Vermont in those ante-furnace days, and I knitted my own till I was a grown girl. They were soft and pretty, too!

But my very happiest hours were spent in the library—a large, square room, with shelves let into the wall. I can see the dark-green wall-paper, with a conventional design in dull India red, even now. There was just space enough in the corner under one of the lowest shelves for a little girl to curl up with a book, and thither I fled when my tasks were over. There were but few children's books in those days—at least there were few in that library. I read *ad libitum* whatever I could lay my hands on—fiction, romantic history, travel—understanding much and guessing at the rest. It was hazardous, no doubt. Yet I often wonder if turning a child loose in a fairly well-chosen library, to browse at will, is not a pretty good sort of education, after all.

After two years a real, actual brother made his appearance on the stage, after all the make-believes that had preceded him, and a rather lonely little girl was very happy over it. He was named William Young Warren Ripley (see how the old names were handed down!) and some of you for whom this little book is written, call him "Oohoo" to this day. But that as a famous writer says, "is another story."

About this time the new mother, to whom the adjective hardly applied now, must have found her hands full; or perhaps father tired of hearing me say my lessons, at any rate, late in the autumn after the advent of the little brother, I was sent



to Plattsburgh to a small boarding school kept by Mrs. Harriet Addams, a sister of grandmother Warren. Time would fail me if I were to try to tell you of the strange, narrow, cramped life there, a life that was puritanical in the extreme. We children (Mrs. Addams' own included) never used a chair at the table. We stood through the whole meal. At the breakfast table uncle Addams, as every one called him, repeated a verse of scripture; then the person at his right hand repeated another, and so it went on round the long board where fifteen or twenty were gathered. We were not allowed to address our superiors in the first person. It would have been the height of impertinence if one of us had said "May I do this or that?" The proper form was, "Will aunt Addams let me do this or that?"

There were long prayers at night, when the sleepy eyes would close in spite of us, and we were in mortal terror lest we should not wake in time to rise from our knees with the rest. On Sunday mornings we went to hear "uncle" preach, and in the afternoon I was given the "Memoirs of Lady Maxwell" to read—two volumes of morbid introspection that lasted me the whole season.

Here I studied after a fashion. I worked a sampler, and learned to do Queen-stitch. And here I, a child of nine, when I failed to know my lesson one day, was told it was well for me that my father was possessed of wealth and social position, as it was evident that I had neither beauty nor intellect, and would need whatever aid I could get from other sources. I was told, also, that if the speaker's daughter, Jeannette, could have one tithe of the advantages that would be lost on me—then we should see!

Poor Jeannette! She died young, as did one after another of the large family, until but two were left. One of the daughters, Mary, became one of the very dearest of my early friends.

Still, though I grew weary over the sampler, and tired of the intricacies of Queen-stitch, I was not unhappy there on the

whole. I took whatever came, and supposed it was the natural order of things. On Saturday afternoons we had the freedom of the school-room, and could do pretty much as we pleased, provided we left it in good order Monday morning. We used to press into service every scrap of lace, or silk, or ribbon, every spare curtain, or old table cover, or dress skirt, or apron, we could lay our hands on, and transform the bare room into what we thought was a bower of beauty. Here we kept house and gave tea parties, and aped our elders after the fashion of children the world over. We were rather strict with our dolls, I remember, and expected prompt obedience.

There was a pretty garden, for Aunt Addams was very fond of flowers, and there were wide spreading meadows and a deep orchard. And as spring came on the birds sang and the sun shone. It was a pretty fair world, after all!

And in a quiet corner room overlooking the garden there were grandfather and grandmother Young—the father and mother of both Mrs. Warren and Mrs. Addams. He was a veteran of the Revolution, having carried a musket at Valley Forge and shared the perils of many a long campaign. She was a tiny, gentle old lady, with the softest cheek a child ever kissed, a close, white cap tied under her chin, and her hands folded on her lap, calm, placid and content. For both, life's fitful fever was over, and they were quietly waiting. Their room was a haven of rest and peace. They were very old then, but it had been said of them in their youth that they were "the handsomest pair that ever walked into Windham meeting-house."

When I returned home in July, 1831, I found a little sister there, and her name was Mary. Surely surprises would never end.

The years went on—years that seemed long to me, but that, doubtless, passed like a dream of the night to my elders. I had no more lessons at home. Much of the time I was at grandfather Warren's in Middlebury, attending school—first Miss Shurt-

liff's "select" school, kept at the old Shurtliff homestead, where I received my first (and only) initiation into the mysteries of English grammar, and afterward a private school on Pleasant street, kept by a clergyman, whose name I have forgotten, where I began the study of Latin. Later on I went to the Seminary, then in charge of Miss Nancy Swift. She was, perhaps, the most inspiring teacher I ever had. I know not how she did it, but she taught the young souls she led *reverence*—reverence first and foremost, not only for parents and teachers, but for all things high and holy.

Meanwhile, father, as might have been foretold, gradually wearied of the quiet life of the farm. He was not yet forty—still in the very prime of life—and he had been in the hot stress of affairs too long to be able to adapt himself to the new order of things. He loved the ploughing and the sowing and the reaping and the gathering into barns; but his strong, ardent nature demanded something more. Neither was it entirely acceptable to mother. In due course of time father started, or became interested in, a glass factory at Lake Dunmore, which somewhat broke the monotony. I don't know much about this enterprise, beyond the fact that the beautiful lake was a charming place to go to, and that I often went there. And so it happened that in the spring of 1837, he sold the farm on which he had fondly expected to spend his days, thus realizing a dream of his youth, and removed his household gods to Rutland.

Shall I end here? Yes, save for a few necessary details; for I have brought the story down to the memory of others. The later history of our immediate family is part and parcel of the record of those now living. In every case the great-grandchildren can learn from their own parents the story of the last half century. You all know, already, how other children were born in what grew to be the dear old homestead at the Centre—the scene of so many festive gatherings on Thanksgiving days and Christmases and birthdays—of so many weddings,

and—alas!—of so many funerals. Many of you remember the two gracious presences that presided there. You know of Helen—who married John Myers of Cleveland, Ohio—and died in the full bloom of her youth and beauty when she was but twenty-seven. Her elder sister, Mary, was lost with her husband, Cyrus M. Fisher, in the wreck of the S. S. Atlantic off Halifax, April 1, 1873. "They lie where pearls lie deep."

Edward came next to Helen in order. He married Amelia Dykeman Van Doren of New York, and while he is somewhat of a cosmopolitan, his home is in that city.

Charles followed Edward. His adventurous feet led him far from the old land-marks. He knew the Orient as one knows a familiar book. He was lovely and beloved, but of him, as of Mary, we must say, "No man knoweth his sepulchre." He, too, was lost off Hai-mun, in the China Sea, December 4, 1887.

Agnes Warren, the youngest of us all, became the wife of Charles E. Parker of Vergennes. May they live long and happily!

The first-born son married Cornelia Thomas, and their home on the corner of West and Cottage streets has long been the loved gathering place of the younger generations.

You all know, too, how he who may be called the hero of these reminiscences became the pioneer of the great marble interests that make Vermont a power in the nation and the world. Later on he organized the Rutland County Bank, and was made its president; an office that he held continuously until his death, September 27, 1875, though for several years previous to that event he did but little active business.

You who knew him only as a feeble old man can have no conception of what he was in his prime, of his noble presence, his air of dignity and command. To show him to you "in his habit as he lived," to show him to you in his youth, as I, it may be, am the only one who remembers him, has been the main purpose of this true story.

Yet he was serenely beautiful in his last years, with his abundant silver hair, that was a crown of glory. As he lay in his coffin it was said of him, in the words of Sir Thomas Browne, that he was "splendid in ashes."

His wife, my dear and honored second mother, survived him nine years. We laid her body to its long rest by his side in April, 1884.

Before I close this record of some things that should not be lost, I want to say a few words about Gen. Hastings Warren—or, as I always called him, grandfather Warren. Now, children, lest you should be puzzled by this mention of so many grandfathers and grandmothers, you must understand that he was my grandfather only by way of love and courtesy. There were no ties of blood between us, for he was the father of my step-mother. But I wish you could all have known him, such a thorough type was he of that much-abused word—*gentleman*—so tender, so courteous, with a certain innate chivalry that made him treat even a little girl as if she were a princess of the blood royal. We became, as I grew into girlhood, very close friends, comrades, and confidants. He died at my father's when I was about eighteen. I don't quite know how it happened, but I was the only one in the room, except old Dr. Porter and his son, "Dr. Jim." Mother, I think, was a semi-invalid at the time, and father had a constitutional dread of the presence and aspect of death, a dread that has come down to some of his descendants. However this may be, my hand held his to the last, and he recognized me with a smile at the very moment his spirit took its flight.

On the 22d of February, 1847, I became the wife of Seneca M. Dorr. The first ten years of our married life were spent in Ghent, Col. Co., N. Y., in a stately old Dutch colonial mansion. It was there that my three eldest children were born, and there I first began writing for the press. Then we came to Rutland, merely, as we supposed, for a stay of a few months—our ultimate destination being the far west, the valley of

the Willamette. But circumstances so ordered themselves that we remained here, builded a new home for ourselves and called it "The Maples"—a home that is now forty-three years old—a home hallowed by priceless associations of love and birth and death—a home in which its builder, full of years, loves, and honors, breathed his last, December 3, 1884.

May they all rest in peace—they whose names are recorded here. "There is no death! What seems so is transition."

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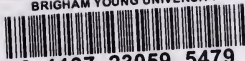








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